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ABSTRACT

The overseas study service program offered by Goshen College, Indiana, is described. The program strives to promote learning with a global perspective. Goshen sends students abroad in one of three ways: (1) a study service trimester, (2) a year abroad study, or (3) a European program which offers art courses in Italy, world civilization courses in England, and literature studies in Ireland. In some cases, exchange programs are sponsored with Poland and China. Approximately half the students on campus at Goshen at any time have had the experience of living in another culture. In addition to the cross cultural experience of the students, the attitudes and understanding of the faculty are pivotal to the success of the program. Goshen also offers a TESOL minor in which students are involved in teaching English to community and campus speakers of other languages. Interaction with those students provides cross cultural learning. Goshen is dedicated to the interchange and exchange of persons, ideas, and appreication among cultures to achieve a global perspective. (RW)

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Panel: "EXCHANGE: ONE-WAY OR TWO"

Ruth Gunden

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Goshen College is an under-graduate, church-related, liberal arts college located in northern Indiana, in a city of 20,000. The current enrollment is 1,025 full-time students. I presume I am on this panel because of our overseas study-service trimester, part of the general education of our students. Even though the numbers of students studying abroad would suggest one-sidedness, that aspect is being counter-balanced to some degree. I think, however, the architects of our program were and are not as conscious of numbers as of emphasizing a particular character.

A global perspective in learning is a characteristic Goshen seeks to have. The shape the implementing of that goal has taken is closely related to who we are and the world view of the Christian body that sponsors us and from which about 2/3 of our students come. The Mennonite Church has a strong service and peace emphasis. The College seeks to promote that emphasis. Such observations as Goshen College alumni having filled 62% of the assignments overseas of the church's Mission Board or a similar proportion of the volunteers for a short term relief and Peace Corps type overseas service of the church coming from among the graduates of Goshen and the overseas experience of the faculty and its beliefs about what an educated person should be in this era were influential in the initiation of the SST program.

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Working toward the goal of the permeation of learning with a global perspective involves people and program, atmosphere and curriculum -- all of which are connected of course.

The oldest form of international permeation we have is through the students coming to us in the International Student program. The first international students were invited to Goshen in 1946 with tuition grants made available. The majority of our 44 current international undergraduate (non-Canadians) students have partial- to full-time tuition grants to assist them. Many of our students come through mission, voluntary service or SST contacts or through international alumni.

The special students from China we have had studying each of the past three years have added a new dimension to this part of the program.

Goshen sends students abroad in a number of ways.

a. Study-service trimester (SST). As a part of a student's general education requirement (12 credit of 36 total hours) a student chooses one of several overseas locations where, to a degree at least, he/she becomes immersed in the local culture. The locations normally are in developing countries or occasionally in countries significantly different from North America. The students usually live with national familes and follow a program of (1) study of language and culture through classes taught by nationals and field trips and (2) a field assignment -- all arranged by the Goshen College faculty member and assistant (often the spouse) plus the local contact person.

This year's locations are in Honduras, Costa Rica, Belize, Haiti, Germany (including some time in East Germany) and China.

Some 3550 students have had involvement in the program during its 14½ -year history. There is a campus alternative to the requirement which about 10% elect. About 85% go on SST and another 5% take a junior year abroad or have satisfied the requirement by having lived overseas.

I will discuss the recently developed China SST location a bit later.

b. Second, there are a number of other educational opportunities overseas which some of our students choose in addition to SST:

(1) The year-abroad study option at colleges or universities in England, France, Germany, Japan and Spain. These options are in connection with approved programs not administered directly by Goshen College.

(2) Goshen in Europe. The Spring trimester is divided into three 3½ week terms, of one course each. This calendar facilitates the offering of such courses as art in Italy, or world civilization in England, literature or peace studies in Ireland, or German in Germany.

(3) Study and work abroad programs in Poland and Haiti --arrangements whereby a trimester of credit can be earned by assisting in teaching English in an educational institution.

To some degree the programs just described are basically one-way directed -- American students going abroad and international students coming here, not necessarily related in any integral way but an interchange. In some cases exchange is the nature of the arrangement.

a. The China SST that is in its third year of operation is a reciprocal arrangement. Goshen College sends 21 students and a faculty pair to China to study and assist in English classes at Sichuan Teacher's College for one semester of a given year and the Bureau of Higher Education of Sichuan Province selects and sends nine teachers of English from their institutions to Goshen College for English language and American culture study and experience for one academic year.

   A related program has brought a Chinese professor to Goshen College for a year to teach Chinese language and Chinese history in exchange for an American teacher teaching in China.

b. The study and work semester in Poland (which is in a holding pattern currently) is also an exchange.

   The Warsaw Agricultural University sends a teacher of English to assist in the TESOL program and immerse herself

(all five have been women) in an English-speaking environment for an academic year and we send students to their university to assist in teaching English. Our students also study language and culture while there.

In some cases we have added reciprocal activity with our SST countries to achieve some two-way influence.

a. A number of international student tuition grants are reserved yearly for students from SST locations. Many such students come to Goshen with an acquaintance of campus students and faculty.

b. Between 1969-1977 something over 125 Costa Ricans who were involved in the SST program as host families or lecturers visited in the Goshen community for a month.

c. A number of persons been brought to campus who have contributed significantly to the SST programming for a week of interaction. Last fall, for example, a Haitian couple were in Goshen. They have served as a host family for a number of Goshen SST'ers and Mrs. Hudicourt is the physician for the unit. They spoke in classes and convocations, assisted in the orientation for the students and faculty preparing to go on SST in winter and spring.

So far I've been emphasizing the programs, but it is the people involvement that makes for the international permeation. Understanding and friendship occur among people; if the programs do not enhance this level of interaction, they are of little significance.

a. Students

(1) American students. Since the usual time to schedule the SST is in the sophomore year, approximately half the students on campus at any time have had the experience of living in another culture. It is difficult to measure how much influence that experience has upon the climate on campus. We would hope that it is significant.

Several research studies by faculty members are helping to understand something of what is happening. Our Dean of Student's recent doctoral dissertation found that positive personality changes in the areas of self-esteem, independence, and interest in reflective thought and in the welfare of others occurred during students' trimester abroad. Another professor is currently in Central America studying the effects of our program on the host country and people. But we are not satisfied with the campus extension and the retention of learnings of the SST'ers. We continue to work to improve this area.

(2) The international students are a source of learning for us that we have not given opportunity for expression in formal ways like we should. True, international students share with their circle of friends but the sharing could well reach a wider circle.

We give them more opportunity in public school classes and clubs than we do in college classes and college forums to interpret and explain the news of their countries or the aspirations of their people.

b. Faculty. Obviously the attitude and understanding of the faculty are pivotal in achieving this institutional goal. Added to the background of overseas experience of the faculty has been the leadership of SST units during the last 14 years -- an involvement of 70 faculty.

We are often asked whether finding the faculty persons to lead the units is not a major problem. It hasn't been. The faculty member and the assistant are given time and financial assistance for language study, when appropriate, prior to the assignment.

Faculty also have had some additional unique overseas opportunities through the College's international thrust.

(1) A number of years ago, (when there was an HEW), Goshen College received a grant that sent 15 professors to SST

countries for one month. Each explored the country he/she selected in relation to their field -- to gather materials and enrich their teaching on campus.

(2) Poland was a site for a number of spring SST units. A spin-off of those negotiations was the Study & Work Exchange I already mentioned plus a faculty visit exchange. Twenty-five members of SGGW (the Polish University) have come to the states for a month to examine the state of affairs of their specialty here and 21 Goshen College faculty members have reciprocated. Our Dean and his wife plus two nursing professors spent three weeks this spring in Poland on such a professor exchange. In early June the Vice Rector of SGGW spent a number of weeks in the U.S. - on our campus and other campuses - following a program of visits prepared cooperatively.

True, it is diffcult to measure the effect of such brief experiences upon one's thinking and operating. Exposure or experience doesn't necessarily mean understanding and learning. The vehicle is provided and encouragement given to that end however.

The small size of the College contributes to the permeation possibilities. All campus students eat in one dining hall. We have the assembling of a good portion of the campus community during the week in our 20-minute convocation and chapels. So when Dr. Hudicourt spoke on campus in a convocation

last fall, she was heard by a large segement of the student body. Those assemblies facilitate having a Central American emphasis week e.g. that raises the awareness of many students in the issues faced there.

It should also be mentioned that Goshen offers a TESOL minor, a rarity among undergraduate offerings. Students are involved in teaching English to community and campus speakers of other languages. The church's Hispanic Ministries and Black Ministries programs are housed on campus. Interaction with those students provides cross-cultural learning.

Areas of concern that remain with us include:

1. Extension of the learnings of the SST'ers on location when they return to campus.

2. Nature of the effect of the continuing stream of U.S. students in the same locations upon our host countries.

3. Giving the international students appropriate opportunity to enrich our curriculum.

4. Keeping the faculty vision alive.

We continue to have the global perspective as the goal. We will continue to work toward the interchange and exchange of persons, ideas, and appreciations among cultures to achieve that world view that we believe is crucial.

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-- Ruth Gunden

May, 1983